

MWCC  
STUDENT

LITERARY  
MAGAZINE

VOL. 7 NO. 1

SPRING '77

gustm

## ALL LATER TONIGHT

She was the kind of woman he would enjoy writing long letters to. But she lived across town and there was no purpose in it. They saw each other often enough.

Once, he lived in a remade farm house that was in a field of a small town. There was a small bay window with a desk fitted into the arc. And, there, unable to see anyone else in the room, he would write letters to old lovers, describing the gnarled apple tree across the road, and the way it snowed in early spring on the pale yellow grasses. He received letters back, notes on fine blue paper that were cheery and scented and promised nothing.

At night, he would drink port or, if there was money, a modest scotch. There weren't many who came by, so he tried to read. But after so long, the existentialists had nothing new and, anyway, the lines wouldn't stay still, so he would have to read with one eye closed.

She was new to him. Those days by the bay window were six years before. He wrote seriously now, rarely taking time even to look up the addresses of lovers. The real thing was so much better.

She was tall with raging blonde hair, neither of which she tried to hide. When she became serious, her eyes and mouth looked sad. There was a quick way with her words.

She was a tall and strong and direct and composed woman and he wanted to write letters to her because he'd discovered that sadness in her and he knew it meant something.

There had been a couple of nights. One, when it didn't quite happen, she probed his mind with questions about music and literature and the bits of art that had wandered to his apartment over the years. He tentatively took her hand and later kissed it, and then kissed her. It was spring. The early dawn shocked them. They couldn't spend the entire day in bed, so he took her home and went out for breakfast alone, reading the paper and looking at people to see if they understood.

She came back. And the next time, he still took her hand tentatively. They were hands that were unaware of their strength. He let it slip that the bed would be more comfortable than the couch, and that's how it happened.

The nights were cold and warm, spring being unpredictable except for purposes. In the days, which were sometimes cool, clouds that should have been fluffy were frayed at the edge like deep feather pillows that were exploding. Even on the more nights that he didn't see her, he was not sleeping well. The style of cloud excited him, but he couldn't remember to say it to anyone. An artist friend of his came over, and it wasn't until then that the clouds were discussed.

He did try writing letters to her, but there were too many things wrong. They saw each other often, and it was awkward to talk about his letters. If it could have been said, he wouldn't have written. The bay window was missing, and the apple tree, and the existentialist thought which was once new but now seemed angry and tired. The port was gone.

So, tentatively, he would approach the topic of love in the letters he didn't enjoy writing. He wrote about so many of the same kind of thing and even made a list of topics that annoyed him to avoid writing them. He knew the type of poetry that pleased her and tried that. He didn't know why that sometimes seemed to reach her or why he wrote.

She was the woman he would write letters to if she were not there. But there he was, writing letters anyway on cold nights and warm. And spring was entrenching itself. The trees were shadowed red with buds.

She would be going away in the summer, a thought that panicked him. He no longer trusted his writing. Or anything else.

And that's the way he slept at night.

K.A. Hakkarainen

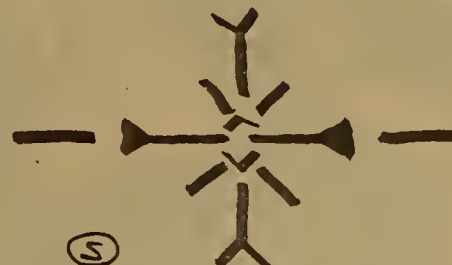


Photo by Mark Geoffroy

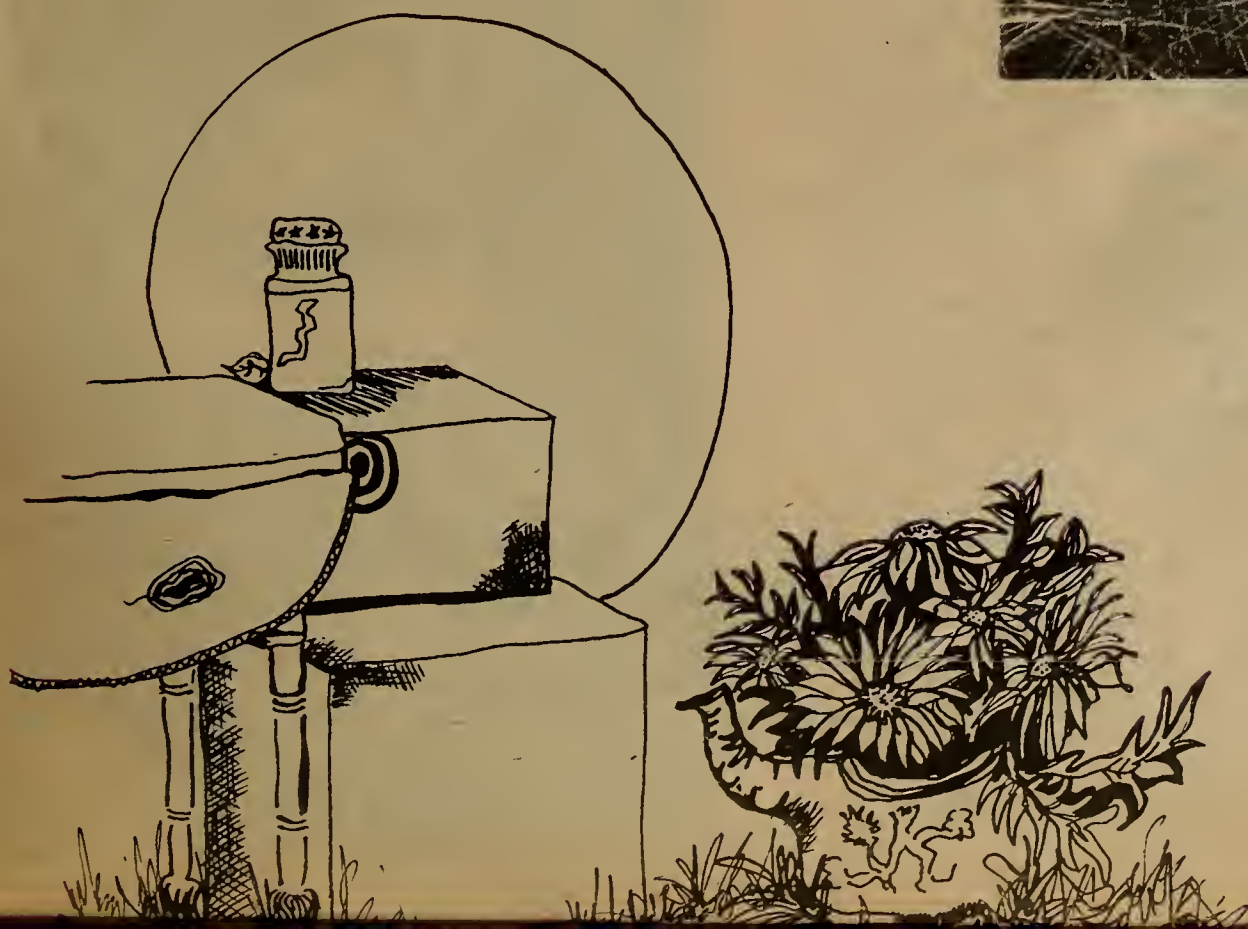






Photo by Roger Temple

#### I DON'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE

I heard the refrigerator door being pulled opened. Then, a bottle crash to the floor. Damn, she's in there again.

"Jessica, get out of the refrigerator," I called.

"No, I want something." She replied in a snotty tone.

"I said, get to hell out of that refrigerator." My voice rising in anger.

A few moments passed and I heard the door slam. She entered the livingroom stomping her feet and stopped beside me.

"Mother, I don't love you anymore!"

My heart jumped to my throat. O, my God, what have I done? Where did I fail? I pretended I didn't hear. I didn't want to hear. I sat rigid in the overstuffed chair.

She took two steps over and stood directly in front of me.

"Did you hear me, Mrs. Grindle? I don't love you anymore."

Louder this time, demanding a reaction from me.

She stood there straight and tall, searching my face. My eyes fell to the floor, noticing that her shoes were on the wrong feet and that her red wool pants were up to her ankles. God, how they grow. It seemed like only yesterday that I bought those pants.

"Mother," she yelled, abruptly bringing me back to the present situation.

I looked at my child's face. The soft blue turtleneck framed the small face and made her eyes bluer, more alert. Long red hair fell softly in ringlets below her tiny shoulders. God, she's beautiful. A lump formed in my throat, how could she possibly say those hateful words. Could she know the pain and heartache she caused? I kept silent, not trusting my voice.

With an exasperated sigh, she turned and went to her room. Tears formed in my eyes and ran freely down my cheeks. Jesus, she's only three years old, what am I going to do when she's thirteen?

Kathy Grindle



He stands in a corner, arms folded across his chest, a symbol of arrogance and dignity. Unjustly convicted of a crime which he did not commit, he awaits the fulfillment of his sentence. His very presence stands as a bulwark of his innocence. Too proud to plead, he faces his adversaries with a fiery glare, his only answer to their accusing eyes and whispers.

His face flushes with anger as his eyes sweep over the many rows of brown seats and catches the sly smile of the real culprit sitting quite comfortably in the back of the room, being overjoyed at his own escape and not caring whether another must pay for his wrongs.

The eyes of the accused cross to the front of the room and come to rest on a large brown desk behind which is seated a stately figure dressed in black and having the obvious present power to condemn or to condone. All eyes in the room are intent, all ears are listening as this figure rises from her papers and speaks thusly. "James David Williams, I trust that now you have learned that I will not tolerate spitball throwing in my classroom. Therefore, you may return to your seat."

R. T. Doucette

Soft, vibrant,  
(nylon gliding over polished steel)  
I slip, slide  
into your arms.  
Gathering all of me  
You whisper,  
(a light dust tickles my ear)  
I giggle--  
we grow hot.  
Burning together  
There is no limit to being a human  
being.  
We have kindled each other,  
There is a flame.  
Carol Crawford



forgive me if i am graceless  
hopeless  
powerless  
-ly reduced

to a man  
who must constantly scream  
I love and need you  
as though  
it was not known  
and enjoyed  
by all the heavens.  
K. A. Hakkarainen

As his hand gripped mine, across the desk, some of his strength was passed into me. I looked into his eyes and my fears were pushed aside by the swelling of the love I felt for him and I knew he felt for me. His words added to the intensity of the moment.

"I'll stand by you, Marianne."

I felt tears coming to my eyes but the door opened and several people walked in, breaking the spell and causing him to take his hand away.

Marianne Morette





"Mark," he said "you remind me of those two guys in the endless summer. You know how they went around the world looking for the perfect wave? Well that's you. You always have to look for the perfect mountain to climb or the perfect trail to hike or the perfect sunset."

"What's wrong with that?"

"I'll tell you what's wrong with that. You're going to wind up just like them. You're going to go around the world and you're never going to climb that perfect mountain or see that perfect sunset. And when you come back, you're going to still have to work at some shitty job in some stinking factory and you're going to be just as frustrated as you are now. That's reality, Mark, and you might as well face it."

"Dad, you never could understand me and never will. We come from two entirely different worlds."

"No we don't, Mark. I understand you a lot better than you think. Did you ever stop and think that maybe you don't understand you?"

We looked at one another, our eyes probing, each one trying to understand the other, and for a split second, we weren't father and son. We were just Mark and Gerry. Two people trying desperately to know each other, both of us fully aware that it's impossible.

There was a painful silence and I went back to cleaning the buckets.

Mark Geoffroy

⑤

Your face is beautiful,  
You know it,  
But your fur tree heart  
is hard and sharp  
To lean against,  
or climb within.

Yet everytime I look at you  
A Christmas occurs,  
And the evergreen is eversoft  
and glistening.

And when I kiss you  
I  
can burn your branches up  
up, up to the point,  
up to the tip; to the top  
till all of your trunk is exposed  
And I am able to climb  
easily,  
up and down.

Carol Crawford

#### HEAD MEMORIES AND HEART TIMES

I knew that day when I saw with more  
than just my eyes, that my heart would  
love you for a long time.

And now my head and my heart have decided  
that I will not love you in terms of time,  
Because my heart can't live by the clock  
and my head can't think in terms of memories.  
I loved you then and I love you now,  
and I know that I will miss you in  
my tomorrows.

Beth Callahan



Photo by Nick Parker



Photo by Nick Parker

I knew when I climbed your stairs that night with a friend,  
that she would be leaving alone. I knew before I climbed the  
stairs, before your invitation, what could take place between  
us. The way you looked at me - the way I smiled and laughed  
and joked, so easily with you - I was well informed long  
before . . .

We tripped nervously up the narrow hall, my friend and I,  
both sharing my anticipation. Two young females, two good  
friends talking softly to each other, whispering and wonder-  
ing . . . Then your small door opened (you had heard our  
steps) and all our excitement was packed tight between your  
attic-like walls upon entering your apartment. There we  
were, the three of us, stuck between intermittent angles that  
seemed to dive in around us slicing up the air.

Three of us; my friend the point of balance, you and I the  
weights. You and I teetering back and forth in conversation;  
all of us talking quietly in the early hours of the morning,  
eating cookies and drinking milk. Talking and eating till our  
mouths grew tired, or dry from the cookies - I slipped into the  
kitchen for water and you followed me. Except for the cool  
damp air we stood alone and next to the hard sink you spoke  
softly to me. I could have told what you were going to say and  
you have answered for me. Between the sink and us, and my  
friend, there was no room for words; no need. She knew long  
before that she'd slip down that hallway alone . . . Your tiny  
door shut-and with one less person in the room our excite-  
ment bounced freely from point to point, angle to angle, me to  
you. . . We were alone like we knew we would be - You  
standing tall, sweet, and hard like a candy stick before me;  
and I intent to swallow you up.

Carol Crawford



Romping through the woods,  
Searching for pleasures, Nobody else  
Can see through your eyes,  
Cathy Little

Horned and ready,  
A fully maned buffalo  
Poses for a nickel,  
Michael Jean

People people peo  
ple people people people  
people people peo  
Lisa Arsenault

Bacchanals  
In the overdone blue of night  
when the wind begins to tinkle  
we drank the absinthe and lay down  
in the gutter.

And though inky rains flooded us,  
our hearts did not become listless  
like so much rotting red garbage  
rolling downstream.

Steadfast, we clung to our bottles  
and braved the stares of passers-by.  
We knew not a one of those prigs  
would approach us.

Then like Venus we rose at dawn  
from our dark little inland sea  
and scraped the shit off our faces  
to meet the day.  
Joseph Brazauskas

In this space between the lines  
Is the place  
Where our love lives.  
Ann Fontaine

A DAY OF SHADOWS  
Stretching out from root to topmost leaf,  
across the lawn, a greeting from dawn.  
You, elder oak, your quiet darkness sweeps  
as you tower over the young elms and lawn.  
The grass green with sun stripes golden,  
but green, it is even as shadows darken.  
Soon you creep back from your holdings,  
resting upon roots at noon as it harkens  
for you to rest before the oncoming evening.  
William G. Allen

QUESTION  
Is it quite wrong to question  
wind or rain or dust on the table?  
I know not how long a mile or what's time,  
I look at clouds--does water really flow:  
Is this a void where nothing stays?  
Anon.

THE DANCE  
Awakened by the storm,  
I watch the winds and rain  
Together to form a symphony.  
Yes! A ballet of trees!  
In their costumes of green,  
bending and twisting in perfect rhythm,  
The wind blows lovely songs.  
I sit and watch in envy,  
For I will never dance the ballet of trees.  
Anon.



#### JOANNA LYNN (THE BLUE ROSE)

I'd like to give you a blue rose  
But there's no such thing, you know  
When I was a child, I had a dream  
And I spoke from my sleep aloud,  
"paint the rose blue."

When I grew up, one time I bought  
Tea roses, and lavender were they.  
Yes, lavender, though it's very strange.  
But to this day, there's still no blue rose  
To give to you.

I later learned a blue rose  
Is a symbol of mysticism--how fitting  
That you should have one as a tribute  
To your beauty so rare and unique.  
Alas, there is none.

When the finger of God and science  
Create one, as surely will happen,  
I'd willingly travel the earth  
To procure one for my lovely you--  
A blue rose for my lovely you.

Eleanor Finnerty

My lover is like the moon,  
arriving with the night  
to bathe me with the  
glow of his love.

Like a lonely lake  
absorbing the moon's rays,  
I wait for you,  
from dark  
until dark,  
Janet Tarnauskos

If you pass my way,  
Remove a stone from my wall.  
Let the water flow.  
Cheryl Ashey

Stooped old woman,  
Rekindling ancient dreams,  
Smiles in her heart,  
Eileen McGee

Searching for some truth  
In solitude's vacuum  
I meet only myself.  
Eileen McGee

Of Another Time  
It was so benignly interesting  
to find my past in a blue envelope  
yes, it was so interesting  
how we once talked of a tightrope.  
I fell off while you pirouetted  
away into some distant life,  
leaving me behind  
trying to break my fall  
trying to grasp a vine  
just taking my time  
yes such sweet, sweet times  
so far, so very far above  
and quite in the behind  
i can still see that wire  
so far above me and straight  
yes, it is a narrow line  
for one with no balance.  
William G. Allen

The moon is a girl  
Dropping her thin negligee  
On the wet crocus.  
Joseph Brazauskas

INDIAN SUMMER 1966  
shadows lengthen on the lawn  
people in a rush to cars  
slamming doors turning keys  
engines roar  
are gone away to definite destinations

I walk away  
and turn to see  
another empty street  
a row of parking meters  
reflecting the sun  
John Going

The trees whisper alone,  
The birds sing to themselves,  
I stand and listen.  
John Frazee





Photo by Roger Temple

#### SLEEPING CAT

Black as coal, the cat had  
Curled mysteriously into itself,  
leaving, a lump  
with no trace of head nor foot,  
nor tail.

I knew there was a cat however,  
Only from a persistent purr,  
and smoothed its hairy back.

Suddenly,  
Instantly  
The lump burst -- stretching like warm tar.  
And there were paws,  
tips of ear and tail,  
And two banana yellow eyes.

C. Crawford

#### ON A PARK BENCH

The golden gates inscribed Roger Williams Park glistened in the mid-morning sun. It wasn't often that I was able to come here, but when I did it was always to this back entrance of the still-charming-to-me park. Here, away from the noise, the hot dust, the people and the llamas, the Monkey House and flaming pink flamingos was where I always found myself.

This was the quiet section and the only real park attraction here was the stables. I leaned against the fence, eyeing the grazing ponies, searching for 'my' chestnut Shetland, knowing he wouldn't be there. My grandfather had spent quarter after quarter here, making a young girl very happy.

I walked down a long, worn path towards the lake where sailors walked with their sweethearts and little boys sailed their ships. It hadn't changed. A swan swam across the blue sun-speckled water with four ugly ducklings behind her. I watched for a moment, infatuated with their graceful gliding.

I continued along the lakeside, shaded by weeping willows and elms and admired a yellow crocus. I was tempted to pick it, but thought better of it and left it for others to enjoy.

Sitting alone on one of the benches I spotted an elderly man with a huge bag of popcorn. For a moment it struck me strange that such a man had popcorn, especially this early in the day. Then I noticed the large flock of ducks around him, eagerly devouring the treat. I immediately thought of my grandfather. He'd been so patient in helping me get over my fear of the greedy ducks. They hadn't cared if they took a little girl's hand along with the bread crumbs.

Then again, everything about my grandfather had been patient and gentle. My fondest memories of him were in this park, it was with him I'd learned to love this place. I thought of Alice the elephant, my favorite attraction here, and remembered the sadness I felt when I'd read of her death. I tried not to think of my grandfather's.

I looked back up at the old man this time noticing the kindly creased face and the young summer-blue-sky eyes. He saw me and spoke a cheerful hello. I found he reminded me of my grandfather, probably because I wanted him to, and returned his greeting. He said something about the weather and as he talked I drew closer. We exchanged some small talk yet after a few minutes I began to feel uncomfortable, not knowing quite what to say.

I was about to make an excuse and leave when he told me I reminded him of his granddaughter. "She had blond curls like you," he said and reached out and touched one, "and she loved this park as much as you seem to. They are gone from me now," he said mostly to himself. I didn't ask any questions. I had learned enough from the loneliness in his voice.

We sat on that old park bench, heads together, and talked for more than an hour. Yet in that short time I had a grandfather again and I'm sure I gave him a granddaughter. I was sorry when I really did have to go. But I knew I hadn't only made myself and a kind old man happy that day. I had a feeling that those who weren't with us were somehow happy too.

Debble Ide

#### THE NUTHATCH

I knew my hand was going to get cold fast but this was one of those times when the only course of action was silent determination. It wasn't that I couldn't leave if I wanted to. After all, this was officially only a simple amusement. But unofficially, as always, there was that underlying tinge of personal honor to be upheld. My hand would grin and bear it.

No one came at first. I had a small shadow of a doubt anyone would. This doubt originated, more than likely, in my hand which was trying very hard to convince me to put it back in its pocket. Even if they did come my hand reasoned, they would go to Sheryl and not to me since she had done this before and was familiar with them.

We endured for five minutes or so without reward when the flutter of small wings announced the arrival of first one chick-a-dee and then another. After a minute of discussion, apparently on what I was doing there, the first chick-a-dee and then the second flew to Sheryl's hand, took a seed, and flew off.

Without looking, I knew I was the recipient of one of Sheryl's victory grins. There had always been high competition between us but somehow it always seemed higher when she had the upper hand.

Just then came a distinct peep peep from deep in the thicket. This I knew from countless tales was the nuthatch. Boldest of all the birds in the thicket, he would alight on your hand and pick through the seeds you offered. Those that didn't make his standard, the majority, would be cast overboard to the ground. Upon finding one acceptable, he would peep his thanks and be off.

The sudden anticipation seemed to melt a few of the icicles off my fingers. This brave nuthatch was my greatest chance of rebuilding my dented pride.

As he approached, he seemed a little confused to find two standing statues waiting for him instead of just one. After a quick inspection, this boldest of tiny birds made up his mind and started, twig by twig, towards me.

"Aaah," I thought, "maybe the scale wouldn't only tip one way this morning."

One twig from my hand he hesitated for only the briefest of moments, then, as if with a conviction made, he leaned way out and nipped the end of my index finger! This completed, he flew to Sheryl's hand and as if conducting normal Saturday morning business, plucked up a seed, peeped his thanks and flew off.

I believe there are very few things in this world that can be termed hopeless. Somehow, someday, almost all obstacles can be overcome. But as I slowly put my hand back in my pocket and glanced at Sheryl's now beaming face, I knew that any hope of my ever living this episode down wasn't among them.

Roger Temple



C. Crawford

#### Thoughts on Friendship and Love

When all around me my world begins to break,  
And sense becomes nonsense, nonsense becomes reality,  
Then do I need you to clear away the garbage  
That life is forever hurtling at me.  
You are my comfort, my shelter in the storm,  
The world is not too much upon me,  
My resistance wears thin, the tough exterior fades,  
Your protection I need from the thieving fiends of night.

Friend, to me you shall always be,  
Our souls in transcending communion have met,  
It is everlasting, this bond between us,  
Eternally shall you a part of my life be, and to  
You do I also give my life.

lover--  
You replenish my spirit, my body rejoices  
In the pleasure and peace you bring,  
My mind is put back together, piece by piece.

You are to me a miracle,  
For each sorrow there is a tripled joy!  
In knowing you, and having you there  
When my world is breaking and I need your care.

Ann Fontaine



Back then,  
when days were long  
and summer, lasted . . .  
and lasted.

There were the Sumac Mansions.

We lived there,  
beneath leaves  
in the shade  
of the sumac trees.

Their red clusters swayed in the breeze.

With our size  
we fitted well.  
The few cars and passers-by  
could never tell.

As we left our impressions in the tall, soft grass,

Spacious rooms with  
any decor we could imagine.  
And visitors of all sorts;  
Our lovers came too.

We spent our summers with popular people of the time,

We laid whispering to  
John, Paul, George, and Ringo;  
Danced with Cary Grant;  
Dinner, with Mick Jagger.

I look back now, pleased with the way I spent my time,

I never returned to  
the Sumac Mansions.  
All our secrets have  
soared to the skies.

To see where once I had laid and laughed, would only make me sigh . . .  
something in my eyes.

Rhonda Davidson

(S)

The morning had grown old. The withered winter sky  
seemed about to rain, and the old man shovelled. His face  
was as grey as the sky. His skin hung loosely on his bones and  
once steady hands shook with each laborious stroke. And still  
he shovelled. He wheezed and coughed, spat on the sidewalk,  
the phlegm that choked him, and still he shovelled.

There was an intensity, a dignity with which he worked  
and as I watched I marvelled at his meticulous progress. He  
cleared a spot the size of a small room, heaving the snow,  
filthy from the city's dust, onto railroad tracks equally filthy  
from their tenure in the city. And now he rested, leaning on a  
bicycle, as old and disfigured as himself; and from its basket  
he produced a two-dollar bottle of wine. And he worked no more.

Anon.

#### The Old Man

Fumbling with his buttons,  
stumbling like a glutton,  
a drunkard's dream  
creates alcoholic schemes  
which fail to compensate  
for a mistress late.

Still he removes the clothes  
as if someone knows  
of his lonely passion,  
simply for a companion  
to caress his aged soul  
from its aching toll.

Lost lovers never return,  
thus his heart burns  
for the quiet solitude  
of a grave for a fool,  
to end the life of misery  
which led him across seas.

The old man's life  
without his old wife  
seems incomplete  
without someone to meet  
and feed his loneliness  
with a simple caress.

Yes, the lady was complete  
and at times discreet.  
He knew when he called,  
an answer would follow  
upon his only tears,  
would lie the truth  
be heard as they fall.

But alas, his wife is dead,  
And his misery to his head,  
While the ambitious strump  
awaits for him to be set,  
then collect her ample fee  
leaving him never free.

A drunkard I named the man  
till loneliness, I came to understand.  
Then I saw him as he was  
and realized why he is what he is.  
The drunkard's simple act.  
It came to me without tact.  
Nor would I relate  
how I came to my fate,

A drunkard fumbling with his buttons  
to hide the lonely love once gluttoned.  
William G. Allen

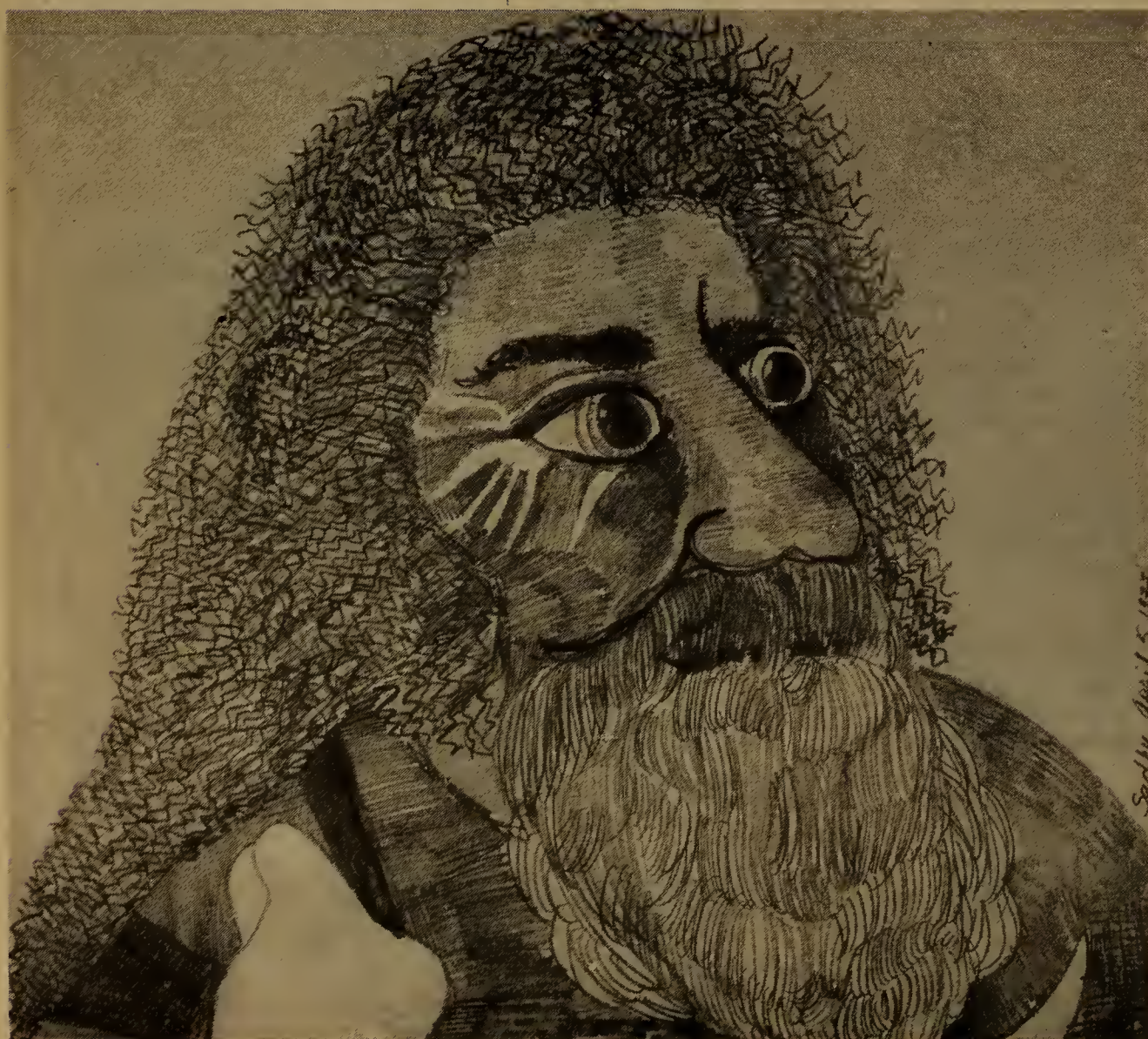






Photo by Roger Temple



## WALDEN POND NOW

"It is a clear and deep green well, half a mile long and a mile and three quarters in circumference, and contains about sixty-one and a half acres; a perennial spring in the midst of pine and oak woods, without any visible inlet or outlet except by the clouds and evaporation." One of the finest things that Henry David Thoreau did in life was to write about Walden Pond; it was also, unknowingly, the worst thing he could have done. Thoreau could not have foreseen that the fame attached to his essay and his pond would, ironically, bring about the destruction of the very qualities of nature he extolled upon. It is a wise traveller who selfishly keeps to himself the secret hiding places encountered along the way. The modern-day tourists flock to secluded spots, and thus destroy the very seclusion they seek. Yet even Thoreau was aware progress would come, though not in the form he envisioned: "The ornamented grounds of villas which will one day be built here may still preserve some trace of this." There are no villas today, but they would have commanded no less destruction than the present occupants do.

"In warm evenings I frequently sat in the boat playing the flute, and saw the perch, which I seem to have charmed, hovering around me, . . ." By early spring the dusty parking lot is jammed and one works his way down to the shore past the kids getting a different kind of high. The shore and trail are littered, trampled, and crowded. There is no supervision, no controls. Motorcycles wander the trail, competing with the bicycles, which should not be there either.

"The shore is composed of a belt of smooth rounded white stones like paving-stones, excepting one or two sand beaches, . . ." Incredulous, I stared down at a young couple embracing, straddling the narrow path/beach, oblivious to the swarm of humanity passing overhead, she displaying charms surpassing anything left of the old Walden. It is impossible to be alone here, all these modern individualists are either faking it, or grandly deceiving themselves. The white stones are gone now, replaced by the textured forms of beer bottles. Mostly the paths are just crowded with walkers, joggers, cyclers, and pets. Dog fights must abound in the summer. "Yet perchance the first who came to this well left some trace of their footsteps."

Dogs and cats now make up 98% of the wildlife above water. The fish are blissfully secluded from the activity over their heads. Having circled most of the pond, one urbanite warned his son that the little marshy area off to one side was "yucky." Of course, it was this less popular area that contained the only water fowl, and a family of turtles sleeping on a log. "An old man . . . tell me that in those days he sometimes saw it all alive with ducks and other water-fowl, and that there were many eagles about it."

"You can even detect a water-bug ceaselessly progressing over the smooth surface a quarter of a mile off. . . ." Today they compete with a coffee can gently being pushed toward a distant beach by the breeze, and the object of stone throwing by those on shore. Now I know where the pebbles disappeared to. A good friend of mine wrote that tired cities look their best under a few inches of snow, thus giving snow a valid function for us. Walden is now well suited for winter weather.

Thoreau's descriptions don't nearly match the moody settings Cooper sometimes drew in the Leatherstocking Tales, his are more philosophical, but it is a pity that Walden was not made into a fictional locale. I recommend you stay home and read the book, it's much better.

Nathan Toth

### Memo to South Carolina I'm afraid

you can no longer know my crimes,  
be my defender or even judge.  
The ties over miles and time are weak.  
We could speculate on this growing apart  
and find two distant souls,  
that is all,

If we know we've been picking the best words  
only to be kind,

who's been fooled?  
Old things, dusted and shined,  
are merely old,  
goddam,  
it's difficult enough to trust  
without the ceremony of friendship  
or the cowardice  
of a poem.

K. A. Hakkarainen

I woke up with nothing in mind except the dream that just got erased in progress. Feeling the grin on my face and the wrinkles at the ends of the smile made me want to go back to sleep and take up where I left off. Closing my eyes and resuming fetal position, I desperately tried to erase my mind of everything in it so I could go back to my mind's paradise.

Each second amplified my failure. The time passed in heartbeats, more intense with each second. My mind's paradise was past history now and a little needle was making its way through my brain in perfect harmony with the drumbeats. Soon, the needle overthrew the beat and dominated the space between my ears.

I got up and headed straight for the aspirins.

Anon.



## ONE WAY OR ANOTHER

She felt foolish about it, actually. She reassured herself by thinking of it as "leaving home," but in her head were visions of a dribbly-nosed five-year-old, defiantly threatening to "run away."

The bulging green schoolbag thumped on her back, the worn olive strap digging into her shoulder. The bottom of her left sandal dangled precariously with each step, held only by a rapidly deteriorating piece of masking tape. The rest of the tape had broken and was curled between her toes; there was a definite favoring of her left foot as she walked.

If only a car would stop and give her a lift. How many miles had it been since morning, anyway? She half-wished she were still at home, but she had covered too much distance to turn back.

Too many miles, man, too many.

The sandal was really getting ridiculous now. It hung back like a third foot, reluctant to go on, pleading with her to turn back. She was almost ready to listen when it hit a fatal pebble and the bottom fell off.

Sorry, pal, you lose.

It was senseless to try walking with one-and-a-half sandals, so she sat on the overstuffed schoolbag, waiting for a car and tearing the remaining part of the sandal into small strips.

A Chevy came in sight and slowed to a stop. She shouldered her schoolbag and limped to the car.

"Going far?" He wasn't young or old. Moustache, short hair, suitcoat - SAFE. "I'm only going about twenty miles up the road, but . . ."

They rode in silence for nearly ten minutes. He whistled, played with the radio, and smoked a cigar. All of it was making her nervous.

"What's in California?" he asked.

"I don't know."

"How old are you?"

"Seventeen."

She wished he had kept on whistling. Their conversation had all the signs of turning into a hassle.

"Why are you running away?" She made a face in her mind. Why? Why-why-why-! Why do you do this; why do you do that? How could she explain it-- it was so hard to finger the problem.

"You're so young . . . I'll bet you haven't even finished high school yet."

What could she say? Could she tell him what it was LIKE to be computerized by teachers who felt that only THEIR views were right, only THEIR opinions reasonable, only THEIR brains capable of thoughts?

"Look at you. You're a mess! Your shoes are broken, your jacket's filthy -- and I suppose all your clothes are in that schoolbag? Why don't your parents . . .?"

But how could HE ever understand when she herself did not? Could she put into words the way she felt when she saw that look on her parents' faces whenever they argued? Could she say it out loud, admit to a stranger that she was a hypocrite, that for all the talk of love and peace she was really far worse than any soldier? She was slowly killing two of the most precious people in the world. She could see that in their eyes every time they spoke - but she could not stop.

"Why don't you turn around and head home? It's only one-thirty now; I'm sure you have plenty of time to make it back -- PLENTY of time. What do you say?"

He had come to his turnoff. He slowed the car to let her out, still waiting to hear her say she would go back; and then he muttered, "Plenty of time."

"Too late, man; it's just too late."

R. T. Doucette



She leaned back slightly on the bar stool. Smiling at herself in the mirror, she opened her blue eyes wide and displayed the vast amount of eye shadow and make-up that she probably spent years putting on. Confidently brushing her bellowing, two-toned hair out of the way, she reached into her bag and took out her apricot-peach blush and lovingly applied it to her high cheekbones.

Throwing and flipping her hair around some more to catch the attention of the bartender, she took a delicate sip from her coffee sombrero, while I walked away wondering who really lives underneath all that.

Anon.



He came out of the building as empty as when he had gone in. The pressures had gotten to him again. It hadn't been a good day. It hadn't even been a bad day. It had just been a day. Like how many others this semester? The only distinguishing thing about today though, was the snow. The first snow of the season. Usually he would have gotten excited about it. Made a snowman. Had a snowball fight. Or at least thrown one snowball. But today, he was just numb.

"Five more weeks," he muttered. "Just five more." The parking lot was ankle deep with snow. Cars looked like sheep with their newly grown coats of wool. "Sheep," he thought. He turned to look back at the school but caught himself. He didn't want to see the building, he already knew what it would look like; a study in depression. Snow-splattered and gray, as if looming out of a fog. No, he didn't want to see that again.

He had a hard time finding his car. Just another sheep. He wandered from row to row, searching. At last he found it, standing alone. He brushed the snow from the handle, opened the door and got inside. He closed the door quietly, so he wouldn't disturb the snow. Inside, it was silent and strangely warm. A diffused white glow came through the windows.

Mark Geoffroy



Photo by Nick Parker





Photo by Nick Parker

#### AMERICAN MUSEUM

Learning to distrust mountains is not easy;  
when I wouldn't give a dime for all of New England,  
Kerouac died,  
(we buried him with embarrassment).  
When I was a hairless cynic,  
Hemingway died,  
(given to a lakeless America).  
Before Berryman . . .  
I was barely;  
because Steinbeck breathed his last too soon,  
it's said I have a stance  
beyond the means of my wisdom or steps.  
Learning to distrust mountains is not easy;  
they come on so grandfatherly grey in the distance;  
K. A. Hakkarainen

#### A WALK IN THE WOODS

I found myself on foot, temporarily deprived of all other means of transportation that afternoon. I would have liked to take my time getting home, but I stupidly accepted all of the food and coffee offered at my friend's house and I stupidly refused a ride home, preferring to walk on such a beautiful spring day. My stomach was in knots, which quickened my step.

Walking up Maple Street, I glanced off at the woods to my right and noticed an old footpath that I had forgotten about up until now. I still use many of the trails in the area, but not this one for some reason. I used to use this path almost daily as a short cut; I could even find my way at night without tripping over any of its rocks. But that was many years ago. I concluded that it was the quickest way to get to the bathroom in my house.

I left the road and made my way into the pines. As I walked deeper into the woods, the noise of passing cars faded, giving way to the soft sounds of April: a light breeze passing through the trees, birds singing from branches overhead, and an occasional rumble from my stomach.

The trail was basically the same as I remembered it, except smaller and more narrow. I rounded a bend and was halted by a barbed wire fence, about half as high as it was ten years ago. I used to crawl under it with ease, as I recall. But now, climbing over it was the only possible method of crossing. The top wire yielded from the weight of my hands and I passed a leg over it. I cautiously avoided the vicious, rusty barbs, not wanting to leave my manhood on the top of the fence.

The path wasn't as well worn as it was many years ago; it had grown in on the sides. I looked for some signs which would prove that the path had been used recently, and I soon found some. I spotted something brightly colored, scattered on the ground up ahead. Once standing near it, I realized that they were pieces of tattered clothing; they had obviously belonged to a young girl. I stood there for a moment and dreamed up little episodes that might explain how the clothes had gotten there. One episode made me laugh, another made me think that I was sick. I purged my mind of these notions, considering myself above thinking such unhealthy thoughts.

My eyes darted eagerly at the ground near the multicolored unmentionables, searching for a clue that might lead to their owner. I found none, and was pushed onward along the path by another painful rumble.

I noticed the earth becoming spongy beneath my feet; heavy rain had nourished the brook that ran across the path, which gushed over its sides and flooded the area in front of me. A slimy, rotting board, which I thoroughly distrusted, reached over to the other side of the brook. I could either cross here or take a long detour. A decision had to be made fast--my stomach was dictating my pace. The board, made for younger feet, protested my excess weight, but held me until I reached drier ground.

The ground was a bit soft on this side, too, enough to maintain the imprint made by two sets of small footprints, which eventually became a mass of footprints centering around an empty half-pint bottle lying on the ground near the edge of the brook. It had been filled with wild cherry flavored brandy, according to the soggy label. A fat, brown slug labored across the 'N'.

For a moment I thought I was going to succumb to my stomach's demands, never making it to the bathroom. I took a long look at some large green leaves hanging down in front of my face, but I dismissed the thought. I continued walking, and as Eastern Avenue came into view, I was confident that I would make it home all right. Coffee, four cups at a time, often does things to me, but I drink it anyway.

Shawn La Flamme

#### THE HEART OF A CHILD

May had entered the land and summer was in the air. The buds were on the trees, and the birds were flying around. The sky was that color of blue that comes with a May day. The air was fresh and the ground was muddy.

As Emily stepped out of the building, she took in a deep breath. The air felt good. It was cooling to her face. After two-and-a-half hours of school, she was on the verge of a headache. It was recess and all the children were running through the mud and wet grass, playing the usual games.

Now that she was in the third grade, Emily felt so much older. In one year, I'll be going to Riverbend School! Maybe that school would be better than this one. Since there would be more people there. She could make new friends. She didn't need the ones here, anyway. Oh well. She sighed and walked around the corner of the school, toward the swing-set.

As she passed the merry-go-round, she heard the shrieks and laughter from the crowd piled on it. There were a couple boys on the outside, running while holding on to the posts, pushing the merry-go-round faster and faster. Emily never went on the merry-go-round.

In the corner of the playground where the swing-set was, there were three children swinging, three children counting, and four children waiting. Emily went and stood behind Lucy. Lucy turned around with a smile on her face. It quickly died when she saw who was behind her. Emily said a half-hearted "Hi." She knew Lucy wouldn't answer. But at least that way they can't call me a snob!

Lucy reached 20, and the girl who was swinging got off the swing and Lucy got on. Emily began to count. As she counted, she looked all around her. It was good to see the trees getting green again. The clouds were gently shifting to the west, letting the blue of sky peek through. A breeze blew softly, brushing her hair out of her face. She smiled a little. Someone in another line noticed the smile on her face and said to her companion, "Look, Emily's smiling to herself!"

"Hey, Emily, whatcha laughing about?"

"Yeah, there's nothing to laugh at!"

"They say only crazy people laugh to themselves!"

Laughter. I don't care, she says to herself. Let them laugh. They don't know. Someday I'll be better than them. They won't be able to laugh then.

"18, 19, 20 . . . Get off the swing now, Lucy!"

"What? I can't hear you, Emily!"

"I said, get off! It's my turn!"

"Oh, o.k. Let me slow down first!"

And Emily waited about 10 more swings before Lucy was finally "slowed down" enough to get off. Emily took her place on the swing.

Immediately, Jackie came over from another line and started counting.

"But I haven't begun to swing yet!"

"8, 9, 10 . . . You better get going, then!" Jackie continued to count.

"It's not fair! Wait 'til I start swinging!" Emily resolutely refused to start swinging until Jackie started over in her counting.

"15, 16, 17 . . . You'd better hurry up!"

"No, start over."

"No. 18, 19, 20! Get off!"

"No, I don't have to; I haven't swung yet!" Emily stood in place, the swing braced against her back.

"You have to get off, I counted to 20! --I'm reporting!" With that Jackie ran off in the direction of the second grade teacher. Emily started to swing sadly.

Then the teacher was there, telling her to get off the swing; she'd had her turn. So the swing stopped and Emily wandered away.

Jackie swung until 40.

Bev Rathburn



Photo by Mark Geoffroy



## THE VISIT

I stepped into the elevator and pushed the button marked 3. It started on its way gently, gliding me through each floor. It stopped on the third floor and I hesitantly entered the brightly lit corridor. As I turned to go through the double glass doors, I glanced up and read the sign, Coronary Unit. I swallowed hard, took a deep breath and forged through the doors.

As I walked slowly down the long corridor, I tried to arrange my thoughts. But what do you say to a person, so close to you, who has brushed death. Tears formed in my eyes, but I gathered all the inner strength I could muster and demanded them to stop. I couldn't, wouldn't cry. Tension began to build in my neck.

I glanced at the number on the wall and noticed that his room was next. I stopped, adjusted my skirt, touched my hair and continued to his room.

I walked through the doorway, noticing that three of the walls were glass. Then, my eyes reverted to the bed on the right.

"Hi, Daddy," my voice quivering.

"Well, hi Mitchy," he said, patting the bed and holding an outstretched hand. My steps quickened as I went to his side.

His color was a pale, chalky white. Two tubes ran from his nose to the back of his bed, on his left hung a bag filled with colorless liquid with a tube extending to his left forearm. To his right was a small machine with a green lighted face. I immediately recognized it. An electrocardiograph. Rising and falling with each beat of life. It had a magnetic effect on me, I couldn't move my eyes from it. Off in the distance I heard my father's voice.

"What did you say?"

"It looks like a beautiful day out, the sun is shining so brightly."

"Oh, oh yeah, it is nice, a little windy," I knew I had to get out of there. I mumbled something about the nurse saying you could only stay ten minutes. I stood and bent over and gave him a kiss and he squeezed my hand tightly.

"I sure do love ya, Daddy."

"Yeah, sure do love ya."

I took one last look at him and at that damn machine, silently making its peaks of life, wondering what I would do if it just went straight across. I turned and walked in quick steps to the door. As I entered the corridor, I broke into a run. My shoes clicking against the highly polished, echoing against the walls, making a deafening sound.

I came upon the glass doors almost before I knew it, and rushed through them; past the elevator, whose doors were open, beckoning me to come in, down to the door marked stairs. Tears blinded my vision as I ran down them and out to the sanctuary of my car.

Kathy Grindle



## LIFE IN THE VALLEY

I no longer sit in saloons which are very old  
to seek the delicacy of one woman's hand.

It'd been far too dark to know delicacy.

The hard and damp brown counter

answered my assaults

with support and more whiskey;

And women without things

came to see me when I had a dollar;

they had not the delicacy.

They were hard and damp and rested

their hands on their hips

as they talked.

I was naive, I guess, in thinking  
that one of them would make a difference  
in their lives or mine.

Another boy has taken my place among saloons  
which are very old,

where cards are played,

and the counters are hard and damp,

and the smell of whiskey is there when you've been away  
a long, long time.

K. A. Hakkarainen

I could easily have carried a ton of bricks on my shoulders  
and had walked a hundred miles. The ladder wouldn't lean  
where it was guided and, bending to get a fallen apple, I dropped  
to my knees. For a second, for just a second, the weight from  
the half bushel apple gab was off me. Ahhh . . . I was just about  
to float away when a voice inside me urged,

"Get up. Get to work."

I did. My shoulders were open wounds, the arches of my  
feet had their own ingrown ladder rungs, and every stretched  
muscle in my heavy legs ached.

My mind became saturated with tears and thoughts.

"I'm quitting. I don't care if he does or not. We're not  
fast enough, and we're not earning enough. This job is no  
good."

"Okay, we'll tell him this is our last day," Bob said, smiling  
down.

I wanted to jump over the tree, go hand over hand down the  
telephone line, and flip up into a headstand on the peak of the  
silo. I wanted to melt into the earth for tea with the worms,  
run triple time through the orchard and hug the first Jamaican  
I'd come to.

I grinned up at Bob. "Thanks."

Joanne DeLisle

a friday night at umass  
Solitude of a college dorm;  
finally with thoughts alone  
in this room of silent conflicts--.  
sitting here now in happiness  
of being among the beds of  
empty sheets and not a  
head to lie on a pillow--except mine.  
The desks - books closed from  
today's lessons, neatly put away.  
The people gone, with knowledge  
in the back  
of their minds.  
Tequilla - sitting in front of me  
alone in the room with a  
single lime - and me.  
Thoughts of home--  
The others are gone;  
why am I still here?  
Maybe I'll feel some warmth  
in this weekly cold room.  
Tonight I'll sleep alone,  
and stare at the yellow walls  
with soft mellow music--.  
For the first time  
I'll feel like me in this quiet room--'  
being alone with my thoughts.  
Maybe I'll get it together - until Monday . . .  
Ann Fontaine

Sickness is everywhere, people starving every day.

"What'd you have for lunch?"

Out there, a drunk is lying, face down in a gutter

His life is an empty bottle.

You drive by and pretend to be blind.

Six million people, burned, poisoned, and starved  
to death;

Left to rot in stinking, black pits;

That was long before your time.

So many things to be done, wrongs to right,  
mouths to feed.

So much love, needed so badly.

And here you sit.

And here I sit.

Doing nothing

B. Laffond



# WHY?

As I walked towards the small group of women at work, I couldn't help but to overhear them talking about the fireman's nightmare of the night before.

"There was a gas leak. . ."

"Someone opened the back door. . ."

They saw me and everyone was quiet. Then they began to bombard me with questions. . .

"How did it happen?"

"Were you there?"

"Did you know Bozo . . . my husband graduated with him?"

I closed my eyes and waited for the silence to start. It didn't. It didn't matter though, because I wasn't listening. All I could do was to imagine the fireman screaming and clawing like animals, at the sunken building, trying desperately to save their brothers. My thoughts changed. I saw Chief Flectner losing his cool, screaming into the portable as he saw his son, a firefighter, fall two stories along with the wall.

My head cleared and I heard one woman say, "They suspect arson."

And I answered, "God dammit, what else is new?" I had to sit down as my eyes filled with tears.

Anon.



## ONCE WHEN I WAS IN A BROKEN HEART

Wondering

When I think back  
On the laughter,  
I wonder,  
Where has it gone?

When I think back  
On the tears,  
I wonder,  
Why has it stayed?

When I wonder of days ahead;  
I think of days gone by,  
And stare at the ceiling,  
Wondering,  
Where the dream went  
wrong.

Bob Cotton

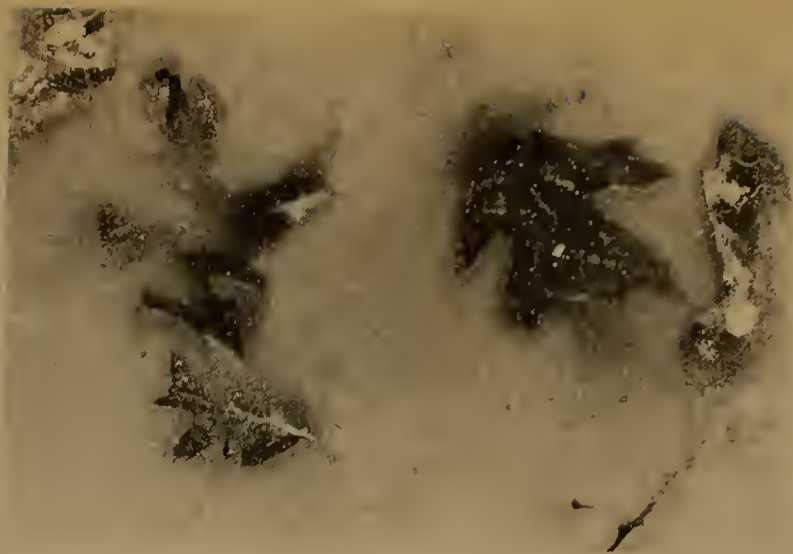


Photo by Mark Geoffroy

It was late autumn and many of the trees had barren limbs. A few still had several leaves, and upon one of these a reddish-colored leaf announced to his browning neighbor, "I'm not going to do it."

"Do what?"

"I'm not going to simply fall off and die as the others have done."

"Why not?"

"I'm not ready to die yet."

"But you're old and wrinkled, you. . ."

Nearly shaking with anger, Mr. Red interrupted with, "So! Who says spring has to be filled with new green leaves?"

"I don't know, but that's the way spring has always been."

By now his red had brightened. "Well, I don't care. I'm staying."

Mr. Brown replied, "I hate to say this, but you will be sorry." Shivering now, he continued, "I haven't got much time. Good luck." And with that he fell from the limb and floated to the ground.

Soon the snow began to fall. As Mr. Red looked around, he discovered that he was the only leaf still on the tree.

"Well, I guess I showed you!" he yelled, as if there were someone who could hear him. "Yes, but it is cold, very cold. Perhaps I shouldn't have stayed. M-maybe y-y-you were right. . ."

Covered with ice, he was unable to finish. He had done it, hadn't he? He hadn't fallen from the tree. But what good was that to him now? He had passed away in the bitter cold of winter.

"maybe you were right."

Rachel Doucette

## A DOGWOOD BLOSSOM FELL

Only now can I remember, without frantic tears, my last day in the meadow. The sun gave a comfortable heat that day, and the air was clean and fragrant. I took my usual seat under the dogwood, leaned back against its sturdy trunk, and closed my eyes.

My mind whirled back through the months and came to rest in a vision of Gary. I could have almost touched his image with its wide smile, dancing eyes, and flashing wild and carefree spirit.

How ironic it seemed. My life had been a humdrum affair until we met. Gary seemed to love living, every moment of it, and in a short time I was bitten by his enthusiasm. Only something wasn't quite right.

From time to time he seemed to lose his exuberance and hope, giving way to frequent talks of suicide. When he received his draft notice there were no tears, no rebellion, nothing. To me war meant death, and Gary, well, he meant life.

True, Gary was apathetic on the surface. But did that mean his exuberance had been superficial, too? I know there was so much that he kept to himself like his compassion, his feelings, and his beliefs. I was painfully empty with the realization that for a year I had believed in something that seemingly did not exist. To save my own convictions, which were rapidly losing substance, I argued and pleaded with Gary to open his eyes and understand all that he had preached to me during our brief relationship.

He left. A month went by without a word, and my loneliness only intensified. Finally, one day I received this letter:

Dear Friend,

I have had a lot of time to think about those last few days at home. I realize now that I was cold and hypocritical, because I never cared enough about anyone but ME. I just did not want to get hurt.

I'm sorry. Is it too late to begin again?

Gary

Maybe I wasn't so wrong after all. Happiness dried my tears, and I felt secure again. From then on Gary's letters came like clockwork.

I open my eyes, remembering the letter I held in my pocket. I expected just another hurried communication written in Gary's simple and sincere manner. I began to read:

Rach,

In war, it seems our philosophies are invalid. Unlike your meadow, the fields out here are charred by the heat. There are no flowers, and the air is 'fragrant' with smoke and stench. Enemies lie side by side in the dirt, their bodies shattered in the gunfire. They're only human. The individual lost in battle becomes merely a statistic.

Why couldn't I understand before now! (I know you sympathize with that.) War, as far as I can see, succeeds only in turning human values and moralities inside-out.

Rach, I give you my word. My life will not be marked as another statistic on the casualty record for this battlefield or on any other.

My love,

Gary

A dogwood blossom fell on the pages as I folded the letter, and it was crushed. That night I received a telegram. . . Gary's promise was broken.

Rachel T. Doucette



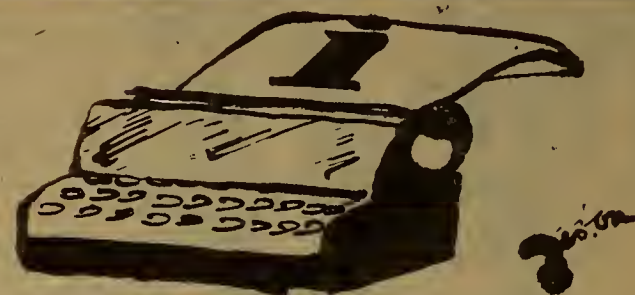


Homework 'The Braid' In March Sometime

## A Think Poem

hmmmmmm.....

R.T.



i hopes

I have an idea, a feeling in my head. In the past this thought was a vagrant, something just hanging around for no particular reason. But now it's not enough just to know that this idea exists. It's not enough just to feel it. I want to let people know what this idea is, I want to understand it better, and I want to know if someone else feels the same way.

I could have written my idea down in a short story, or a poem, or an essay. I could have submitted it to this literary magazine. However, I am a procrastinator by nature and did neither.

This is a dilemma shared by many students and is unfortunate for the Mount's literary magazine, i, which needs to hear from every type of student. This is what a literary magazine is for, to be a forum for the students it serves.

The ideal literary magazine should contain the experiments of many minds. It should allow these experiments to mix with each other, to complement each other, and possibly to explode with each other. A literary magazine should be scenic, depressing, exhilarating, and hopeful. Also, it should reach the majority of the student body, be read, thrown away, or saved. In short, a literary magazine should allow the action-reaction process to happen in someplace other than a testtube.

This year's issue of i is not an ideal magazine. Certainly, it contains fine material from many hard working and deserving students. It is not their efforts that is being criticized. What is being criticized is the failure of i to hear from the business major who writes mad, passionate poetry, the liberal arts major with a head full of intellectual essays, or the table top drummer with a history notebook filled with song lyrics.

Also, how many students even knew that i existed before this issue was distributed. Of the few who knew of i's existence, many did not care and some even thought that most Mount students would not be capable of composing a worthwhile magazine.

The material in this issue should dispel that myth, but that is not our major goal. By letting you know what fine and excellent writing and art work was done this year, i is letting you know what to look forward to. Also, i's new tabloid format was adopted this year in the hope to reach the entire student body. Hopefully, this format will be continued with at least three editions next year. i wants to do some creative shouting in the future. Also, i hopes that the student body will do some constructive shouting in return.

Paula Pitkiewicz

**MWCC  
STUDENT**

**LITERARY  
MAGAZINE**

VOL. 7 NO. 1

SPRING '77

Magazine Co-ordinator . . . . . Marianne Morette

Editorial and Layout . . . . . Karl Hakkarainen, Shawn Laflamme, Melanie Poirier and Roger Temple

Editorial Committee . . . . . Joanne Delisle, Kathryn Drake, Kathy Blackwood, Paula Pitkiewicz, Kathy Grindle, Marianne Green Volpe and Yvonne Hemingway

Staff . . . . . Michael Cloukey, Richard LaBrie, Mike LaPalme and Maurice Reidy

Art Committee . . . . . Carol Crawford and Mike Gaston

Advisors . . . . . Gene Cauthen and Arthur Marley







